

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 00778 010436Z

17

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

OMB-01 /068 W

----- 067286

R 010239Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 958

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY SUVA

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, NZ

SUBJ: LABOUR ALIVE AND WELL IN NELSON

REF: WELLINGTON 458

1. FEBRUARY 28 BY-ELECTION IN NELSON RESULTED IN 1,400 VOTE MAJORITY FOR LABOUR CANDIDATE MEL COURTNEY. MAJORITY IS SOME 300 VOTES MORE THAN THAT OBTAINED BY LABOUR'S SIR STANLEY WHITEHEAD IN NOVEMBER 1975 ELECTIONS, BUT SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS SIGNAL THAT COUNTRY IS DISSATISFIED WITH NATIONAL PARTY GOVERNMENT OF PM MULDOON. RATHER, VOTERS PROBABLY FOLLOWED INGRAINED HABITS RESULTING FROM 18 YEARS OF PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION BY LABOUR, AS WELL AS NEW ZEALAND TRADITION OF VOTING AGAINST PARTY IN POWER IN BY-ELECTIONS.

2. VICTORY DOES, HOWEVER, GIVE LABOUR NADLY NEEDED SHOT IN ARM AND SERVES TO BOLSTER SAGGING FORTUNES OF OPPOSITION LEADER ROWLING. NONETHELESS, ROWLING

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PROBABLY WILL NOT PROFIT AS MUCH FROM EVENT AS WILL

ARTHUR FAULKNER AND COLIN MOYLE, WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE
FOR LABOUR'S STRATEGY AND TACTICS DURING
CAMPAIGN. WHILE NEITHER IS LIKELY TO MAKE HIS MOVE SOON,
BOTH HAVE DESIGNS ON THE PARTY LEADERSHIP AND WILL
POINT TO NELSON AS EXAMPLE OF THEIR SKILL IN BRINGING
IN THE VOTES.
SELDEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR RELATIONS, BYELECTION, ELECTION CANDIDATES, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976WELLIN00778
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760077-0114
From: WELLINGTON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197603106/aaaadptt.tel
Line Count: 68
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 WELLINGTON 458
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <07 JUL 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOUR ALIVE AND WELL IN NELSON
TAGS: PINT, NZ, (COURTNEY, MEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006